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THE  
C H U R C H  
Distinguish'd from a  
**Conventicle:**  
IN A  
**NARRATIVE**  
OF THE  
**Persecution of Dr. WELTON**  
and his Family,  
FOR  
Reading the COMMON-PRAYER in his own  
House.

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By *R. WELTON, D. D.*

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Omnibus exutus Deo Fidens.

Lord! Look upon mine Affliction and my Pain. Ps. xxv. 18.  
For thou art the Helper of the Friendless. Ps. x. 16.  
Hear The Right. O Lord, consider my Complaint. Ps. xvii. 1.  
For Dogs have Compassed me! The Assembly of the wicked have  
Enclosed me! Pt. xxii. 16.  
Be not afraid of their Terrors: But and if ye suffer for Righteous-  
ness sake, happy are ye. 1 Pet. iii. 14.  
Rejoice: ye in that Day, and be Exceeding glad, for Great is your  
Reward in Heaven. Luke vi. 23; Mat. v. 12.

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THE  
C H U R C H  
Distinguish'd, &c.

**I**F ever any Clergyman of the Church of England had Reason to Appeal to God and the World, with the Shrieks of his Distressed Family, suffering under Enthusiastick Rage and Cruelty, that hard Lott is at this Day fallen to my Share.

For, certainly, there is no Precedent of any former Persecution, wherein *The Instruments of Malice* have exercised their Fury, and Blotted themselves with the Spoils of this suffering Church of God, that will exceed my Distresses, under the Pretence of Law or Justice.

The Hasty Violence with which I was thrust out of both my Livings, was merely Arbitrary, and without any Instance of the like Na-

ture ; as may be seen at large in those \* Books, wherein the unparallel'd Injustice of my Deprivation from *White-Chapel* is fully represented : And, in truth, the *Whole Body* of the Clergy, in respect to our *Ecclesiastical Immunities*, is, in the most tender Sense, therein, affected ; and the Laity, as much as their Souls are worth, are concerned to acquaint themselves with a Subject of so great Importance to them, if there be, in earnest, (as most certainly there is) that sacred Relation between a Parochial Priest and his People, for which they must, both, be Accountable to God ; and against which, no Secular Power, nor Tyranny in the World ; no, *not the Gates of Hell shall be able to prevail.*

As to my other Living in the Country, there was not so much as the Form of any Process, or *Mock-Trial*, made use of to Divest me of *That* ; but without any previous Notice, or so much as a single Question demanded, the *Peremptory Warrant* was sent down ; and at One Stroke it cut me off from the Cure of those Souls for which I am to be accountable at *That Great Day of Retribution*, when I trust I shall be justified before God and Angels, and Men.

Thus have I been thrust out into the World to Starve with my Wife and four Children,

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\**The Case of not Taking the Oaths. And The Spiritual Intruder with-*

but any Accusation against me, but my Integrity to God ; my Adversaries never having made any Legal Proof, so much as of my being Non-jurant ; or, by any right, or due Course of their own Protestant Law, Convicted me of Recusancy, to this Day.

Under these Circumstances, to procure Bread for my distressed Family, I ventured to take a House in my Own Parish, hoping, that by the usual Advantage of disposing of the greatest Part of it, I might make my self easy as to the Rent ; And, which was my chiefest Aim, take what little Care I could, of those Souls given to my Charge by the Authority of the Holy Ghost. Being deprived of my Church, I was willing to prepare some Conveniences in the best Manner my Circumstances and Persecution would allow, for that Little Remnant who had Faith strong enough to keep them steadfast to their Duty ; whose Consciences would not permit them to run on in the Broad Way ; but did oblige them, as in the Time of Persecution, to join in Prayer and Communion (after the ancient Pattern of the Primitive Christians and Confessors, under their severest Tribulations) with their Own Orthodox and True Pastors.

To this Purpose, I devoted an Upper-Chamber in my House, with as much Decency as the

the Place would afford, to the Service of God; in which all that we did, was to join together in Prayer, according to the *Liturgy of the Church of England*. After that, I usually read one of Dr. Barrow's printed Sermons, or a Homily; and Administred the Blessed Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.

This is all the Offence that has been given to *Men of Violence*; that has provoked them to the Outrage they have committed: This is all the *Popery* and *Recusancy* of which I am Convicted: This is the *Conventicle of Sedition* for which I am *Confiscate* and *Plundered*, and *Rabbled*, and my Children frighten'd into *Distraction* by the rude and impudent Domineerings of the very *Scum* of the *vilest Sects*, *Presbyterians* and *Anabaptists*, &c. And these were the Arms that the Consciences of Puritans gave them to swear upon me, and, as the \* *Gazette* expresses it, upon which *They gave so often Information upon Death against me.*

I must confess, this is a Stroke the Priesthood of the Church of *England* has never felt till this Day: Neither could it have been imagined, that ever the Fanatick Rage would have been raised to this Height, thus to tear a Clergyman to Pieces, only for doing his Duty, saying his

\* See the *Gazette Novemb. 12,*

Prayers in the Communion Service ; which has been *at least Indulged* to the Brethren of our Communion (I mean in this Nation) even from the Landing of the Prince of Orange to reform us.

But the Circumstances with which they accomplished my Ruin, are so *flagrant in Maliciousness*, and so very void of *All Humanity* and Justice, that I trust the Account which follows, will Enlighten those who have hitherto been deceived by the false Insinuations and Hypocrisy of pestiferous Men, who, while they have been bringing their cruel Purposes to bear, have concealed their Cravings, and their Thirst for Blood, Sacrilege and Plunder, under the specious Pretences for *Liberty, Property, and Moderation*.

Matters are now grown ripe for their bloody Purposes ; and therefore they are no longer for *Varnish and Concealments* ; they have thrown their Mask off ; and have begun with me : And I shall bless God for having set me in the Front of those who are to *Perish* for his sake ; for giving me the Glory of a *temporal Destruction*, may it but be effectual to open the Eyes of Men ; of Those especially, who have the Laws and Liberties of my dear Country (and the Church of God, in a Manner) in their Hands, so as to prevent the total Overthrow and Ruin of a sinking Hierarchy, which

which is thus Ravaged by Insults and Violence committed upon the sacred Rights of a Christian Priest, as it will appear by what follows.

It was on *Sunday* the 10th of *November* last, when having performed Divine Service, I was reading one of Dr. *Barrow's* Sermons, there came a Detachmeut of Soldiers, with a Rout of others of all Sorts and Sects, to the Number of about fifty or threescore, who attack'd my House in a most outrageous Manner. They had, it seems, brought all things with 'em fitted for their Purpose, even to the very Operator, the Blacksmith, who was to do the Work, with the Instruments usual for *House-breaking*, which they presently set in Motion, and broke my House open.

The sudden Noise and Thundering they made, put the Congregation into some Confusion; for they were so far from giving us any other Notice, or making any Demand, that in about two Minutes, the forcible Entry was made, before it was possible for any one to have got down the Stairs to let them in, which I desired one in the Place to do, upon their Ringing the Bell, which they did with an unusual Violence, at the same time they were forcing the Lock open.

No sooner were they Enter'd, but they began their Havock ; And, in a promiscuous Manner, without Distinction of the Justice from the Scoundrel ; And with their Swords drawn, in the Torrent of a Rabble, Ran up the Stairs, some Cursing as they drove along, and roaring out, Where are they ? Where are they ? Others with their Halberts ; some with their Truncheons, the Soldiers with their Bayonets fix'd to the Muzzels of their Musquets ; which made it a dreadful Scene to a Company of Christians met together for no other purpose, but to serve God, and naked and helpless of all Defence but their Prayers and Tears ; so that, in truth, the Barbarity of *Glenco* it self, could not have been usher'd in with a more dismal *Apparatus* for Massacre and Murder, under a military Execution.

The first Attack was made upon me by one \_\_\_\_\_, A professed Presbyterian ; in all Capacities fitted for this Work, as it will appear by the Sequel. This Fellow, with an Air of Insolence, and a Tone usual to those of his Sect, ask'd me, in the Face of all the People, who were lamenting round me, ‘ Why would ‘ I give them this Trouble ? ’ To which I reply'd, ‘ I will answer you *That at the Day of Judgment.*

Nothing is more certain, than that the Book of Common Prayer has, long, been a very

*Great Offence to these pretended Saints, especially considering the Purity and Decency of their own Ways ! And that I shou'd be so bold, as to say Prayers to God in the Language and Address of the Liturgy of the Church of England, could not but be very Irksome to this Sectarian and his Party : But God help us ! or a little Time will compleatly rid them, once more, of this Trouble.*

I was then Order'd, by one of the Military Men, as I apprehended by his Habit, to follow him, at which many made great Cries, and Bewailing of our Condition ; For there were Hundreds, at that Time, who did believe This was to be their last Farewel to me in this World ; as they have told me since ; Concluding, from the Scene of the Soldiers, their appointed Bayonets, &c. and the Rout they made, breaking the private Chamber Doors and planting themselves all about, that I was going to be made the *first Sacrifice* to the Cravings of these Blood-Thirsty Men.

And I must confess, when I first beheld the Soldiers Posted in their several Dispositions, within my House, and consider'd the Occasion ; It remembred me of a Grandfather I had, a Reverend Priest of the Church of England, *but a Popish Delinquent for all that*, who, in the Days of Oliver, that execrable Tyrant and Usurper, was Sequester'd and Ejected his *considerable*

siderable Preferments, and Plunder'd of all he had, as I am now; and Dragoon'd; whilst his Wife, a Woman of Birth and great Goodness, was Try'd for her Life as a Felon, at the Bar of one of their **Mock-Courts of Judicature**, for no other Reason, but Cutting down the Corn off her Husband's Glebe-Land that he had Sow'd; and I could not forbear to say within my self, Happy were the Days when our English Regiments us'd to Fight for the Church of *England*; and Our Ancient Laws to plead in its Defence; But now, my Country-men, your Faces seem to be turn'd another Way! And what is it you are going to Establish in our Room!

And here I cannot but acknowledge the great Goodness of God, in assisting me, at that Time, with a more than common Share of *Fortitude* and *Religious Resolution*, against the Violence of such *Irregular Invaders*.

Which made the *Persecution* so unusual and *unnatural* to *Englishmen*, and so *Monstrous* and *Hateful*, in these first, and Preliminary Appearances of it, that some among the common Soldiers themselves, could not forbear to express their *Abhorrence*, in the Hearing of my Wife and several others, in these Words, ‘ Well, for my Part I don’t like these Doings ! ’ It puts me in Mind of our Blessed Saviour

‘ Jesus Christ ! How, **those** Jews came with  
‘ their Swords and Staves to take Him !

However, by God’s Assistance, I found  
my self Resolved and Unshaken ; And I doubt  
not, but by that Measure of his blessed Spirit,  
He had supply’d me with, I could have met,  
even with Death itself, *the utmost of their*  
*Terrors*, and glorified God for (his Truth) the  
Sacred Cause of it.

It would indeed have melted any *Heart of*  
*Flesh* to have been present at the Time, when  
**I** met my Children turn’d out of Doors, in  
the Custody of the Soldiers and *Rabble*, who  
would not suffer them to go so much as into  
their own Lodging Rooms, to shelter them-  
selves from this ungrateful Sight : To see how  
they Wept and Clung about me, and would  
not be taken from me, thinking I was to be  
Murder’d, was very Moving, I must own, to  
my self ; and rais’d an Indignation in me; tho'  
**I** hope not exceeding the Bounds of my Cha-  
racter and Profession, when it put me upon  
saying to the *Sequestrators*, and the Rest of  
the Posse then about me, that ‘ as they had  
‘ already Plunder’d me of both my Livings,  
‘ and taken away the Bread that God has ap-  
‘ pointed for the Support of these Innocents  
‘ (pointing to my Children) were They come  
‘ to take from us our spiritual Provision too ?  
‘ tho’ they had divested me of my Churches,

‘ so

so that I was debarr'd the meeting my People there ; must we be famish'd in a spiritual Sense also ? Must we not Pray to God in our Distress ? Let them depend upon't I wou'd so long as they suffer'd me to Breath ! And therefore since they had left me little else besides my Life, I was not afraid to Die : If they were come for my Blood, it was ready for them.

Whether they were any Thing mov'd with this Freedom of Speech, and those Dear Objects of my Calamity before them, I know not ; but they told me they were come upon repeated Orders from *Above* ; without taking any Notice, that there is *One* yet above *All*, who beholdeth Oppression and Wrong ! And, in his own due Time, *Will Plead the Cause, and wipe away the Tears of the Oppressed.*

They, then Objected against me, that in the Time of our Devotion, the Outer Door was shut ; and they were forc'd to Break it open : The latter Part of which, perhaps, may not so properly be answer'd to, *at present* ; I only therefore, observ'd to them, as before, (*viz.* Their Haste and Fury.) Adding withal, that we Refuse Entrance to no Person, Honestly or Religiously dispos'd : But that the only Reason of the Door being shut, was to prevent *Pick-pockets*, and *French Hugonots*, and such pilfering Fellows from coming in among us ;

For

For that these would be glad of any Opportunity to come and create Disturbance, and Breed Disorder and Confusion, under Pretence of Zeal for the Protestant Religion; that thereby they may the better prosecute their Common Practices of *Filching* and *Stealing* what they can get; and that there have been seen several Times, about my Doors, *Hundreds* of these ragged Regiments of Hugonots together, with their *short Protestant Truncheons* under their Coats, prepar'd for any Tumult they could Create, the Consequence of which, every True Englishman is Apprehensive of. —— For these Reasons, and for the Sake of Peace, and because we wou'd give no just Occasion of Offence, we were willing to keep out such Cattle from among us.

And the Truth of the Matter is, this Set of Rabble are the very Scum and Offal of the Earth; and against such as these only my Doors were Shut; who cannot be contented to be safe here from that *Justice* and *Beggary* from which they Fled; and to be *Entertain'd* and *Fatten'd* with what belongs rather to the Poor of our own Land; and to grow Rich at Our Expence; but must needs rob us of our Religion too, by thus Invading *Insolently* upon our Devotions, and making Plunder Sacrilegiously upon us.

It was to this Effect I argu'd against the plausible Pretence of their main Objection ; Urging the Severity and Injustice of our hard Case, who are reduc'd to this *Fatal Necessity*, Either of being left open and expos'd to the Mercy of a Vile, *Thieving Crew of Foreign Plunderers and Pick-pockets* ; or to a more *Unjust and Merciless Censure of Delinquency and Sedition*, for no other Reason but because we wou'd secure ourselves from their *Rapine*, by *That* which is the common Fence of every Natural Born Subject, the *Shutting up of our Doors against them*.

But yet I could get no other Reply to this, than that they came not thither to Dispute : And then having got things ready, as Paper, Ink, &c. they began to Examine me, and propos'd Questions to me, which I Resolv'd to Answer, if I thought fit.

The first was, whether I wou'd take the Oath of Abjuration, which I Refus'd : The next was, whether I wou'd take that of Allegiance ? In Answer to which I told them in these Words, ‘ Gentlemen I must be plain with you, I don't know that *You* have Authority to Administer any Oath at all ; And I'll take None, no, not of *Any Sort* at your hands.’ They ask'd me if I made Use of the Form of the Liturgy of the Church of *England* ? which I Averr'd I did, without *Any Addition* : But in  
the

the Prayer for the King, do you mention the King by Name? I reply'd, we indeed mention no Names: We leave that to God; for God knows Names; and we pray to God for his Own True *Anointed* King. Well, Sir: But in the following Prayer do you mention the Prince, &c. by Name? To this I answer'd, We pray for *All* the Royal Family.

This put an End to my Examination, and they permitted me to retire to the House of one of my Parishioners, which I did, not being allowed upon my Demand to return to my Congregation, who where all this while Detained under a *Guard of Soldiers*, and not suffer'd to come down above five or six at a time; so that before they were all dismiss'd, some of 'em were Detained under this *Military Confinement*, near seven Hours.

This was the Prologue to the *Tragedy* which follow'd after. And there are several other remarkable Instances of the Rancour which attended it, such as that of *Terrifying* and forcing the Consciences of Men with an Oath about their Names and the Places of their A-bode; the impudent *Revilings* and Reproaches of Scoundrel Fellows (planted at my Doors) against our suffering *Innocence*; their Searching my House for Arms, under the Pretence of several Informations given upon *Oath*, of Numbers of them concealed there; which  
by

by all that I can learn, is taken from the Perjuries of an old Rag-Wench, a zealous Puritan, in whom is visible, all the Hypocrisy, Gift of Lying, False Slander, and Malice that *Witchcraft*, or the Author of it can suggest or inspire into her.

It was in Confederacy with this wicked Woman, and in their Midnight Conferences, as the Neighbourhood has assured me, that the other Sectarian aforementioned cook'd up these false Informations upon Oath. But what is Perjury, or the Bearing false Witness against a Neighbour, to these pretended Saints; so that it does but serve **The Good Old Cause**, and rid them of the Trouble of the Church of **England Prayers and Communion?**

There has been many an Innocent as falsely sworn out of his Life by the merciless Cruelty of such Miscreants, in the Strength of their Zeal and Diabolical Fury!—That God may be pleased in his Righteousness to defend us from them, let every Soul that has the Church of **England** at his Heart, join with me, in Supplication to God, against the Malice and Bitterness of these Perjurant Enemies of our most holy Religion and Constitution, in this one Collect of our sacred Liturgy, however Troublesome to them, saying:

‘ O Almighty God, King of all Kings, and  
 ‘ Gouverneur of all things, whose Power no  
 ‘ Creature is able to resist, to whom it belon-  
 ‘ geth justly to punish Sinners, and to be  
 ‘ merciful to them that truly repent; O Save  
 ‘ and Deliver us, we humbly beseech thee,  
 ‘ from the Hands of our Enemies! Abate  
 ‘ their Pride, Asswage their Malice! And  
 ‘ Confound their Devices; that we being  
 ‘ armed with thy Defence, may be Preserved  
 ‘ evermore, from all Perils, to glorifie thee  
 ‘ who art the only Giver of all Victory, thro’  
 ‘ the Merits of thy only Son Jesus Christ our  
 ‘ Lord and Saviour. Amen. Amen.

Let us now see what, upon this Occasion, is  
 called, their Proceeding against me, *According  
to Law.*

And here I am to observe in the first Place,  
 That the Justices who sent these Engines to  
 make *Spoil* of what I had, have, in Writing,  
 refus’d me, upon my Demand, a Copy of their  
 pretended Warrant for the *Ravage* which  
 they made upon me. So that I am *Confiscate*,  
 and am not allowed so much as to know the  
 Reason why!—According to what Law can  
 this be? And whose Case also may it not  
 be?

But from the best Information I can come  
 at, the Accusation specified in what they call  
 their

their Warrant against me, is, That I made use of the Prayers of the Church of England, with my Congregation, without any License from the Bishop, or from Them; which therefore they call, Holding A Seditious Conventicle: Pretending that there is an Act, or Acts of Parliament made in King Charles the Second's Reign, against it.

In Answerto the first of these, viz. The License of the Bishop for Officiating my Divine Function: As I am a Priest of the Church of the living God, and have been for almost these 30 Years Consecrated to the Great Work of the Ministry, by the Holy Ghost, upon the Laying on of Hands, the sacred Hand of an Orthodox Bishop; This is the Evidence of my License and Authority for the Priestly Office.

But as to any Lay-power in the World that should presume to License into the Priestly Function, I would Abhor the Thoughts of Prostituting and Demeaning my High Calling, so far as to fetch a License from a Justice, to perform the Office of my Priesthood.

Were there any human Law that dar'd attempt to interfere with, or disannul that Great Act of God, in the Institution and Establishment of his Church and Holy Royal Priesthood, for which the Blessed Jesus shed his

*precious Blood, in Opposition to that Great Charter and Gospel of Christ, by which the Highest States Themselves, and all the Acts of Parliament in the World shall be judged.—Whether we should obey God rather than Man, judge ye.*

What a Jest is it then? What a Mockery would it be of God? What a Sort of *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?* Were I capable of being such a *Traitor* to the *Spiritual Kingdom* of my Blessed Master, as, in Opposition to his *indelible Character and Commission*, to betake my self to *Man* for *Leave* to discharge those *Indispensable Duties* of my *Sacred Office*, which I have *Gow'd* to the *Holy Ghost*, and which God will require at my Hands!—Let the Presbyterians and Anabaptists, and all the Herd of Hereticks, and Children of Schism, Go, *in the Gainsaying of Corah*, for the *Relief of their tender Consciences*, to Establish the Powers of their *Diabolical Calls and Illuminations that Way*; they have, *in Truth*, no better Title, than *The License of a Justice*, to establish their *Enthusiastical Pretensions*; but *Our Ministry* is of *Another Calling*: And in the Strength of Christ, in whom *Alone* the Ecclesiastical Dispensations are derived upon us, we will rather chuse to *Rejoice in the Spoiling of our Goods*, and *Testify our Profession unto Blood*, than to *Debase the Glory of the*

the Christian Priesthood at this rate ; or give up our Sacred Charter to an Erastian Discipline and Dominion.

But there is not, there cannot be such an Act of Parliament, nor ever was : And that these Gentry have been too free with my Locks and Doors, my Goods and Chattels, under the Pretence of Law, will appear from the 22 Car. 2. cap. 10. sect. 3. which they pretend to proceed upon.

By the Preamble of this Act, we find it was intended to Prevent and Suppress Sectarian Conventicles, in order to Defend and Maintain the Church of England, in all its sacred Rituals and Decency, against All Sectaries and Dissenters from it.

And who is there as yet, except the Interpreters away of my Goods, so bold, or so stupid, even under the willful Blindness of those who are inventing Artifice to pull us down, as to venture in the open Light, to maintain, that any Orthodox Priest of the Church of England can be any ways obnoxious to the Penalties of this Act, upon the Account of using the Liturgy of the said Church, in common Devotion, either with his own Family, or to any Number of Communicants under that Form ?

Could

Could it ever be intended, or can it be imagin'd, that in the Sense of *that Law*, a Priest of the Church of *England* should be comprehended under the Notion of being a **Seditious Sectary**, or the Person *therein* describ'd, who, in Pretence of tender Conscience, or under Colour of any Exercise of Religion in other Manner than according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of *England*, should be Present at other Conventicles? &c. What a Paradox is here! What a Collection of Nonsense, and Contradiction, to make Way for the **Demolition** of the *Church and Household of God*? to pull it down by *that very Law*, which was made only and entirely for its Support and Protection! The very *Fence* which was design'd for its **Establishment and Security.**

For certainly, the *Manner* of the Liturgy, and the Practice of the Church of *England* therein, altho' it never had been before Authoriz'd by any Statute of Man, yet, by this very Act it is become that of the *National Church*, and what we call by *Law Establish'd*: And it is evident, as I said before, that the only *View* of this Act was to bring **Sectaries and Non-Conformists** to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, to a *Compliance* with its decent and pure Way of Worship.

Can it then be a Breach of this Act, to comply entirely with what it Enjoyns! Or can any Number Assembled in any House or private Chappel (tho' not Consecrated) and in their Divine Services using only the Form of Common Prayer, be said to perform the Exercise of Religion in other Manner than according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of England? How can the Conformity to this Act, thus be *Conjur'd* into the Breach of it! By what Witchcraft are things thus turn'd into the Reverse of themselves? That a Priest of the Church of *England*, upon no other Account, but complying with the literal Dictates of this Law, and adhering strictly to its Injunctions, should therefore become Obnoxious to the Sentence and Penalty of it; Confiscate and Torn to Pieces, and sent with a Wife and Children to Starve in the open World, as the Preacher and Teacher of a **Conventicle** intended to be Restrained by this Act.

In all the Acts of Toleration since the Revolution, the **Indulgence** has been given, *not to the Church of England, or any of its Members!* That has stood by itself, upon its own Bottom, its **more Ancient Laws**: The Favour has been **Indulg'd**, as is seen by the express Terms and Wording of those Acts, **To Protestant Subjects Dissenting from the Church**

Church of England ; To Exempt them from the Penalties of certain Laws : Wherein then, or from whence is it, that I am taken hold of, (from the Pretence of a Law of my Country, by which the Church of *England* is thus Fenc'd about) as a **Conventicler**, or a **Non-Conformist**, only because I am not so ! Unless the Church of *England* is now to be interpreted into a **Conventicle** ; And, according to the afore-mention'd Act, all the *Riff-raff of Enthusiasm*, in the utmost *Licenseness* of **Heresy** and **Schism**, are the *Church of England by Law Establish'd*.

There can be no greater Distance, or more diametrical Opposition, than there is between the Liturgy of our Communion, and the slovenly Performances in the Dissenting Conventions of these Protestant Subjects : But their Non-Conformity is Indulg'd ; and my strict Adherence to the very Law, has undone me, under the Colour and Pretence of this Act, as a **Dissenter..**

Thus am I Worry'd for the Good of the *Church of England*, because I Conform to it ! and am become a **Dissenter** for Reading the Common-Prayer. — For Ever blessed be the Memory of that *Royal Martyr*, whose Reign was to flourish ; whilst those Blood-thirsty Men in 41, who hunted Him about as a Partridge upon the Mountains, at last dragg'd him down

down and laid his *Sacred Head* upon the Block,  
to make him a *Glorious King!*

This is the true Account of the Proceedings  
that have been against me, by what has been  
call'd **According to Law**: I am *Despoil'd* by  
the Hands of Dissenters of what I had left,  
for Exercising my Function as a *Priest of the*  
*Church of England*; They have indeed given  
me hard Names before my **Destruction**!  
First *Reviling* me as a *Popish Recusant*, and then  
making me a **Dissenting Conventicler** in  
order to come at me; But my *Priesthood* is be-  
yond their Reach, and my Commission, in all  
its *Sacred Powers and Indelible Characteristicks*,  
as strong and forcible as of any Man Living of  
my own Order; and consequently there is not  
one of my Brethren who is not as much at the  
Mercy, and his *Sacred Rights and Immuni-*  
*ties* as much at the *Disposal* of those who have  
*Infringed* upon Mine, as Mine were, should  
but these *Laws, Establish'd, Once*, for the  
*Church's Preservation*, set their Faces against  
them as it is with me this Day. The whole  
Clergy being as much within the Purview and  
Construction of that *Act* as my self, and there-  
fore as Obnoxious to its *new Interdicted Penalties*  
and Prosecution.

But what a hard Fate is it upon me and  
them, to be Interpreted into this *Orange*  
*Dilemma*! That, according to the present Con-

struction of this Law against us, we must unavoidably perish in this World, or Everlastingly.

By the Rubrick of our Church, which we are solemnly Sworn, at our Ordination, to Observe, we are under a most positive Injunction, to Officiate the Liturgy, either to the Publick, or in our Families, every Day we Live, without some Extraordinary Prevention. The express Words of the Rubrick are,

*‘ And All Priests and Deacons are to say Daily  
the Morning and Evening Prayer, either Pri-  
vately or Openly, not being Let by Sickness, or  
some other urgent Cause.’* So that upon the present Difficulty, we are left to this fatal Choice, either by submitting to the Indispensable Obligations of our Ecclesiastical Injunctions, to incur the Penalty of the Law as **Conventiculars** and **Dissenters** and **Seditious Sectaries**, and so to be **Confiscate** this Way ; or to render our selves Obnoxious to the **Eternal Confusion** of our **Disobedience**, from the Fulminations of the Church of God against us, for the **Perjurious Neglect** of our Duty, in Compliance with, or out of Terror to the other ; that is, for Fear of being proceeded against **According to Law**, as our Sentence is at this Day.

And this is the Execution that has been Prosecuted in its utmost Force against me, And

And that indeed in a manner so very *Extra-ordinary* in the *Suite* and *Malice* of it, that it would be difficult to determine whether the *Lucre* of the *Spoils*, or the *Lustious Pleasure* that was visible in the *Destroyers*, whilst they were *Dis-seizing* me of what I had, were the most *Prædominant*, or carry'd the greater Balance.

To make which Evident, it would be sufficient only to give a Hint at the Characters of those *Instruments* of *Rapine* who came to Execute their Ravage upon me and what I had yet left.

There were Four of 'em : Such a Set of *Originals* as it is impossible for Words to Represent : Was one to have Rak'd the *Kennels* of all the *Sects* in the Nation, there could not have been dragg'd out a Collection of more *Vileness* than is to be found in these Men.

The first and grand Ring-leader of this *Tribe*, was the aforemention'd *Informer* and *Presbyterian* ; And certainly there needs no more be said, to raise Expectation concerning his *Accomplishments* this Way, and the *Consummate Execution* on his Part.

The next, his True Brother *in Iniquity*, was one ——, a true *blue Protestant Presbyterian* also. This was a Fellow put out at the

publick Charge of the Parish t'other Day, but now keeps a little Hovil of a Shop, if it may be call'd so, of Penny Pots, &c. Living the Scorn and Contempt always, but now the Abhorrence of the Inhabitants that dwell near him.

The Third is an Anabaptist, Rivetted, ex Traduce, in his gentle Perswasion: The Offspring of one of the most Truculent and Rancorous of his Profession, and a true Cion from that Canker'd Stock. By Trade he is a Knife Cutler, that there may not be Instruments wanting, on Occasion. ——.

I have met with the Observation somewhere, that of All the Sects of Schismatics that Dester the Church of God, the Anabaptists are the most remarkable for Cruelty and Butchery: And I must needs own, that if a Sect is to be judg'd by the Instruments they Employ, these Latter, in their Way, have somewhat of the Balance on their Side.

Especially when I have Accounted for the Fourth of these Barbarians, whose Insolence and Inhumanity was, indeed, beyond Description, but who is also an Anabaptist in the utmost Extent; one ——, who is, or was, a Priest of Theirs, as they Term it, but is now a Botching Taylor, in Rag-Hair, making, I suppose, a better Penny by That,

That, than the other Gift he Blasphemously pretends to.

These were the Pack got loose to Bait, and Prey upon me: Coupled in Perswasion, but One in their **Thirst for Blood** and **Destruction**. Proper Judges of things of *Value!* And very fit and Qualified to determine in the Case of a Sequester'd Clergyman.

I am inclinable to believe, that nothing but mere Necessity would force One Gentleman on such Measures as these to get a Penny; and if it were possible, I would in Charity find out *somewhat* to say in Alleviation of the other new Esquire, his most Aggravated Proceeding, who is, I find, in *Holy Orders*, according to our Church; but has **Waived Them**, to Qualify himself for a **Persecutor** of those of his own Function.

But methinks the Gentry, who were all the while by, Refreshing at a Publick House, near enough to see the Place of their **Enrichment**, might, at least, have gratify'd the Craving of their Indigence, by endeavouring to provide Instruments not so **Cruel** and **Malicious by Principle!** Tho' it must be owned, they would have found that a Difficult Undertaking: For there are none, except these Traders in Iniquity and Oppression, who would not Abhor the **Eccrable Work** which they were upon: Nothing but the Zeal of such **Moderate Men** could have stood

stood out against the *Recoils of Human Nature*, in so *Barbarous* a Case.

But they knew very well who were set o' Work : A Set of *Creatures* who would have Acted the *Other Deed*, had there been Occasion, scorning the cowardly Relentings of a *Heart of Flesh*.

Whether I am uncharitable, or have Reason for what I assert, let God and Man be Judge ; when after the true Character I have given of these Men, I declare, in some few Instances (among many more that I could give) the *Insolence* and *Barbarity* of their Proceedings.

I was gone out to visit one of my Parishioners, who had been some time indisposed, when these Fellows enter'd my House ; upon which my Wife, frighten'd and surpriz'd at the Subject and Manner of their Rudeness, hasten'd to come and acquaint me with their Designs, which one of them observing, would have stopt her, saying, *That if there were not Goods enough in the House for the Money, he wou'd have the Cloaths off her Back.*

When, upon my Return, I found such *Vermin* got in my House — Had I not been informed of their Business, I should have expected to have seen my Family Bound and Gagg'd, and my Moveables upon the March, after the Way of the Traders in the Night ;

Night : For there could not be a more parallel Resemblance.

I ask'd them, if they were come to play the Old Game of 41 ? Upon which the Ring-leader, in a true Presbyterian Strain, told me, *He was come to Distain upon my Goods for 40 Pounds, According to Law, for Keeping a Conventicle.*

Blessed God ! That ever the Distressed Church of England should behold the Day, when a Rout of the vilest of all Sects, Fellows that can hardly Write or Read, shall Arraign its Clergy for Holding a Conventicle, and Plead The Law for their Sacrilegious Blasphemy and Prophaneness.

This Insolence was almost intolerable to me ; and tho' I had resolved to have said no more to them, I could not forbear asking 'em, *Then, If the Scroll they were offering to produce, were The Solemn League and Covenant ?* Rememb'ring them withal, that They were the Spawn of That Oliverian Generation, That Brood of Sequestrators, who, 'tis to be feared, are now yelling in their Torment, for their Plundering Innocent Families, and their Sacrilege against God ; And They were going in their Fathers Steps.

I must own I spoke These Words with some Emphatical Warmth, which I hope the Cha-

Charity of all good Men will excuse, setting my Case before Them ; but especially, considering How much it was in the Cause of God, and the Church of Christ ! That Conventicle ! It was a Part of That Body of which the Blessed Jesus is, Himself, The Head !

Upon this, they began, after their formal Way, to Cant and Harangue about Law and Passive Obedience, with an Impropriety suitable to their Understanding ; which gave me Occasion to say to them that stood by, Do but observe now the Impudence and Hypocrisy of these Fellows ? For they are come to rifle me, and now they fall to Preaching ! Was it not just thus that Oliver us'd to pray ! When that Execrable Traitor was going to imbrue his Hands in the Blood of his King ! To take away the Royal Martyr's Life ! Come said he, and let us go, and seek the Face of the Lord in Prayer ! And so these Miscreants, in their Godlessness, are going to take away what I have ; and in Order to it, do but hear how they are a' Preaching !

Then it was they came all close up to me, blowing their unsavoury Breath in my Face, gabbling all at a Time somewhat about I know not what ; and lifting up their Staves to knock me down ; which made me think it high Time to be upon my Guard as well as

I could, and I threw my Arms open, and shov'd them from me.

And this is all that the Party, according to their wonted Veracity, have Call'd and Publisht to the World, as the Lifting up of my Fist, and striking them in the Face.

Whatever they have sworn upon this Matter, I know not ; neither do I regard it : For as to the Swearing of such, as I told them to their Faces, it was no more to me than their Preaching ; being fully satisfied of their Qualifications to swear any innocent Man out of his Life, if their Cause required it.

I take it to have been from this Act of their Insolence, that my dear Child, the eldest of three Daughters, believing they designed to murder me, by the Litting of their Staves, and Offering such rude Violences upon me, fell into such an Agony, that it bereaved her of her Senses, tho I bless God she is since recovered, being removed from the Sight of these Men, whom, after this, I left in the midst of their Havock, not enduring the Sight of their Barbarity any longer.

For certainly never was there more Inhumanity beheld on the like Occasion. As many who were Eye-witnesses of their Outrages have told me since, to whom the very Name, of these Savages are become Detestable and Abhor'd.

They broke open every Lock they came at ; and tore down the things of most Value, as if they had been the Rubbish of their own Dung-hills ; insomuch, that when some of those who stood by, saw with what a favoury Malice and Greediness they went on, and could not forbear upbraiding them with their merciless and savage Cruelty, who could be deaf to the Tears of innocent Children, and a lamenting Mother over her **Distracted Child**, one of the Barbarians reply'd, with a Curse, *Who wou'd have Mercy upon them !*

They have not allow'd me so much as a Copy of any Inventory of my Goods which they took from me ; nor even of the Valuation of their own pretended Appraisement ; so that I can give no certain Account of the Loss I have sustained : But, by what I can gather, they have taken more than cost me above Four Hundred Pound, for the pretended Forty which they came for.

Besides the Cabinets of Japan, and Chests of Drawers, Looking-Glasses, &c. there were four Standing Beds which they seiz'd ; one of which, from the Upholder's Shop, and without the Down Bed, &c. that were upon it, cost me Forty Nine Pounds. Several other things, to the Value of Twenty Pounds, went away as I am well inform'd, rated at Eighteen Pence :

Pence: And so all was huddled off about the same Proportion till their own Greediness was fulfill'd.

Several of my Goods, as I am well assur'd, have been directly stoln by these Raggamuffians, and offer'd to private Sale, that were never Inventory'd nor Apprais'd at all.

And yet, by the Providence of God, *The Sacred Plate of the Altar*, and my Library of Books were, both, Preserved ; tho' themselves declar'd their *first Instructions* were to seize them. No doubt on it ! For the *Communion Plate*, those *Sacred Vessels dedicated to God, in the Service of the Blessed Sacrament*, would have been *too delicious* a Morsel, to these Sons of Sacrilege, to have been foregone.

And to have seen the *Fathers* of the best Edition, and the *Councils, Body's of Divinity, &c.* Those inestimable Treasures of Learning and Religion, valu'd by a Broker, that is, Sold, by the *Hundred Weight* as Waste Paper, this must needs have been most suitable to the Ignorance of these *Inspiri'd Blockheads* ; and the best Use and Entertainment they are capable of Receiving from them.

But God, whose Eye is ever *Awake*, to Behold the Malice of the Unjust ; and by whose blessed Will the Designs of *The Adversary* are Bounded, and suffer'd to go *so far and no farther* ; That Almighty Providence, who

Confines the Raging of the Sea with a Ridge of Sand, He set the Limits to these Roaring Lions which they could not pass ; And, notwithstanding the Cravings of their Hunger after the Utensils of the Altar, He prevented their Sacrilege by the Weakness of a little Child : They were Infatuated ; And they could not withstand That Weakness, after all their Watchfulness and Malicious Resolution, from their own Nature, and the Injunctions that they said were Laid upon them.

Which Way my Books Escap'd, I cannot otherways Account for : Some of those Zealots having also own'd, that the Charge was given them (and therefore were Importunate) to proceed there, so soon as they had got the Communion Plate secure.

But the same Providence stopp'd the Mouths of these, the Issues of that Great Dragon, whose Throat is wide as Hell, to Devour and to swallow up.

To God be All the Glory, To whom Alone it is entirely Due !

They continued their Havock, Revelling in my Ruins all the Night ; seizing that little Provision for my Family they could find ; And tho' they had brought one of my dear Children into Distraction, and were desir'd, by those who sat up to Watch with her, that they would, at least, Cease the Noise they made,

made, yet there was scarce one Quarter of an Hour, all Night long, but the Bell was Ringing, and their **Confederates** coming in, I suppose, to behold the joyful Sight ! and to Congratulate each other upon the **Blessed Time**, when these pretended Saints should thus Triumph over the Heritage of God.

But, what shews their implacable Malice in its most Consummate Accomplishment, is the **Barbary** with which they treated my Child in her most **deplozable** Condition.

After they had been thus Revelling all Night in my House ; they prepar'd next Morning, for the Carrying off their Booty ; And with a harden'd Heart not to be express'd, Enter'd the Room, where the Child was kept within her Bed, without any Concern or Ceasing from their Ravage upon that dismal Scene, which wou'd have mov'd a Savage to Relent; So far from it, that in their Religious Way of Grinning, and Smiling in her Face, Regardless of her Tears and Exclamations against them, and without being Affected with her Groans and deep Sighings, which were like the Strugglings of Nature with Death, they still went on till they had left Nothing but the Bed on which she Lay.

A Sight so **Barbarous** on the one Side, and so **deplozable** on the Other, that One, among them, could not, at least he appear'd not,

not to Resist it any longer, saying to my Wife, *I must own, Madam, the Injury I have done ; I am Sorry for what I have done, and I heartily ask your Pardon ; but I can't call Yesterday back again.*

What Sincerity there was in this Speech, I leave the World, with the utmost Charity, to judge by what follows ; as also of this Man's Pretence of *accepting my Security for the Money he demanded.*

As to this last Article, I only observe that This, at best, was the same that the *poor Loyalists in 41* were forc'd to do, *viz.* To pay Great and Unreasonable Sums for that which was their Own before.

But, in my Case, this was so far from being any Offer of Mercy to me, or my Family, that it was a *Snare to Crepan* me, had I comply'd with it, and to double my *Distress* upon me ; For had I given this Man Security, that is, my *Bond* and *Judgment*, my Goods would not have been, by any Means, securer to me, because from the Pretence on which they proceeded, they might have sent another Claim of the same Nature within a few Days after and have again *dis-seiz'd* me of what I had, as they did before, which would have Reduc'd me again to my present State, with the *Additional Weight* of a *Bond* and *Judgment* upon my Shoulders.

Had there been any Sincerity in this Man's outward Shew of Concern, why did he not *Then*, make it good, when there was such an Object of Compassion before his Eyes ! But, *then*, he who before would have taken my Security, could not be prevail'd upon, by the Prayers and Entreaties of the compassionate Company that stood by, only to Accept the Security of all that were present, for the Bed which the sick Child was in, in the Height and Paroxysm of her Distemper, which their Cruelty had brought upon her. To this they would, by no means, be Entreated ; No : But after all, they forc'd the very Bed away from her, so that if I had not found some other Place to send her to, She must have ~~pe-~~  
~~rish'd~~ in that Condition upon the bare floor. This was their Mercy !

And in this Condition it is that I have been proceeded against ; bereav'd and dis-seiz'd of what I had, on Account of doing my Duty, and that which I was ~~Sworn~~ to perform, upon the solemn Sanction of my Priesthood.

For this it is that I am first stript Naked, by a Set of the Worst of all the Sects ; the Enemies to God's Church, and our most Holy Religion ; Executed, in Pattern of the *Valerian* Law, without either Tryal, Conviction, or Condemnation ; And in this Condition forced into the World, with a large Family, without  
any

any Means or any Allowance whereby to get my Bread, or Feed my Children with the common Supports of Nature ; but from the Dew of Heaven. For it is a cruel Fiction and Falshood they have Reported, and what some who are our Friends have been too credulous to believe, and too forward to propagate, that I have had any the least Return of my Goods again.

One would have imagined, that their Malice might have rested here ; that it might have been Glutted with the compleat Destruction they have brought upon me, and my distressed Family : But to shew that their Cruelty has no End, that it is insatiable, and beyond all the Degrees of Humanity, the vile Forgeries and Calumny, the Villanous Falshoods and Slanders, which would make a Moral Heathen Tremble upon the very Thoughts of 'em, are sufficient Demonstrations what the Mercy of *this Generation of Vipers* is.

God grant that such their Mercy may never be recompenc'd upon them ! But whoever looks into the Instances of God's Judgments, which have, so remarkably, pursued the Families of the Oliverian Sequestrators, even already ; in a little more than half a Generation, how strangely the Vengeance of God has overtaken them and their Posterity, before one single Century is come about ; how visibly

bly the Tithes and Offerings of which they have robbed God, in depriving His Priests of their Dues ; And keeping Them back from Them ; And the Sequestrations with which They have enrich'd Themselves ; How visibly, I say, These have been the Cankers to eat into, and consume what they had before ; And upon whose Account their very Inheritances left them by their Fathers, have melted away like Dew ; So that their Names are scarce remembred upon the Earth, unless it be with that Infamy that attends 'em in their just and ruinous Condition ; Whoever will but give themselves Leave to look into the Truth of these Judgments of God, will find but little Reason to hope, that it will be otherwise with those who are now so Active in the like Principles and Practice.

For the Good of these very Men, under whose Cruelties I mourn, if it be possible for them to be Recover'd from the Gall of Bitterness, they are now in ; But especially for the sake of those who know not, or *Don't Consider what they are Doing*, who keep from God his Due, by detaining the sacred Tithe and Oblations from Them to whom God has given them, *According to His Law* ; I purpose, by the Divine Assistance, to Publish to the World, A Collection of what Names and Families I know, or can be truly inform'd of, whose Fa-

thers were Enrich'd by the Oliverian Sacti-  
lege and Plunder; and Themselves, At this  
**Day**, the Monuments of God's Judg-  
ment on That Account.

There are several of them, to my own Per-  
sonal Knowledge, who have, by an Amazing  
Round of Affairs, been, in this Little Time,  
Reduc'd to the most vile State of Beggary  
and **Nothing**.

And my Request is, to every well-disposed  
Friend to the Churchof *England*, to whose  
Hands this Compendium of my present Suf-  
ferings shall come, to Furnish me with as much  
Intelligence as they can, in Truth and Real  
Fact, upon this useful Subject: 'Tis in Sin-  
cere Charity to them that have **Undone** me,  
that I propose this Undertaking; and for the  
sake of the **Dissenters** Themselves, in a  
great Measure (who are still craving for my  
Life) that they may Avoid, as much as  
is Possible, Those  *Rocks of Offense*, upon  
which their Fathers have Split, and been  
**Confounded**.

In the mean Time, I would Apply Myself,  
in the Name of God, and for the sake of our  
common Redeemer, to those Gentlemen of  
This County, who hold the Scales of Justice  
in their Hands: To These a Suffering Bro-  
ther, of our Communion, hasAppealed from  
the Violences offer'd to him, of the same  
Law-

Lawfulness and Justice with mine: and upon the same Occasion.

The Fate of the Church of *England* depends, in a great Measure, upon their *Determination* upon Us! If We meet with no Redress, there will be, We hope, some who have Love and Fear for our Religion, ready to pay Her the Last Respects, and to throw their Rosemary into Her Grave!

*W*hat will you do?

**F 2 POST**

## POSTSCRIPT.

**T**HAT this little Narrative, of my present Sufferings, has not appear'd according to the first Notice of its Publication, is owing to a violent Fever, which lately siez'd upon me, and Endangered my Life, Occasion'd by the Shifts I have been Forc'd to make, to Shelter me, and my Dispers'd Family, under the Protection of the Compassionate, our Own Beds having been **Torn** from us.

Since which, *viz.* On Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup> Instant in the Morning, I was Arrested by three Messengers, one of which, with Great **Cruelty**, offer'd several Times, to force me out of the Bed, in that **Dangerous** Condition.

And altho' my Physician, a Gentleman of great Worth and Capacity in his Profession, to whose Charity and Vigilance, next to God, I owe my Recovery, did positively Assure them, it would be to the *Hazard of my Life* to be *Removed*; and did Certifie, under his Hand,

Hand, the *real Danger* I was in; yet it was with great Difficulty, that he Restrain'd this Fellow from Committing the *Fatal Violence* upon me, being himself Affronted with Great *Scurrility* and ill *Manners* by him.

But, at last, when they found I was not Able, of my self, to Rise from the Place, where I was, they were prevail'd upon to represent my Condition to the Earl of Sunderland, by whose Humanity I was Respited from the Execution of their Warrant, which I take this Opportunity to Acknowledge to the World; resting Assur'd, that these Fellows receive no *Couenance*, or *Instructions* from the Noble Persons who employ them, to behave themselves with so much *Insolence*, and such *Intolerable Insults*; as they usually do, to those who have the *Misfortune* to fall into their Hands; which would Compel a Man to run any Hazard to Avoid them, as one would shun the *Plague*.

A more Flagrant Instance of which can scarce be given than in the aforemention'd Messenger, who went from me, with one of his Accomplices, to my Dwelling-House, under the Pretence of Searching for Papers, as I heard afterwards, tho' he neither told me nor my Wife of his Design; nor whither they were going, or upon what Account; nor demanded

manded any Keys, or Means of Searching, for what they expected, in any peaceable Way; But as soon as they were got into the House they Broke Open *every* Lock there; And, in the most **Mischievous** Manner they could, Rummag'd over, and Threw about, *That Little*, which the Mercy of the **Devou-  
rers** had left me; And, finding nothing there, which they came for; nor any Person, in the House, more than a Servant, and one of the youngest of my Children, who had Borrow'd a Bed in the Neighbourhood to Lie upon; after the many **Oaths** and **Curses**, and the most **Horrid Imprecations**, and **Rebi-  
lings** of me, which are not to be **Numbr'd**, nor, indeed, *Repeated*: He siez'd upon the Servant as his Prisoner, and Confin'd her about five Hours; And, then, he Lock'd up the Outer-door, and carry'd away the Key with him; And like a Barbarian turn'd the helpless Child into the Street, where it wan-  
der'd about, for some time, in **Tears and  
Terror**, not knowing whither to go, till one, who knew it, coming that Way, in **Compassion**, Conducted it where I was.

There is a small Parcel of Money missing, which was in one of the Chambers, before it was broke Open: He siez'd and carry'd away several of my Pictures, if nothing else, with him.

But,

But, to Enhance the Merit of This, worse than Heathen, he spared not the very Wine which was prepared, with the Bread, and Separated to the Service of God, in the Holy Eucharist : This, in an Atheistical Triumph, he Profanely and Sacrilegiously Carous'd with, and Drank it up !

This is the now the Third Time, that my House, within about Two Moaths, has been forc'd and Rifled ; the Third Time, that the Locks of my Doors have been broke Open ; And all that belongs to me expos'd to the Malice and Greediness of Barbarous and Cruel Men ! From whose Influences and Mercies. — Good Lord deliver Us ! Amen.

*White-Chappel, Jan. 28.*

17<sup>17</sup>/<sub>18</sub>.

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*F I N I S.*

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